



World Health Day

April 7, 1954



see overleaf



A mother shows her son to a visiting public health nurse in Guazapa, El Salvador.

The Nurse: Pioneer of Health

The choice of this year's World Health Day theme, "The Nurse—Pioneer of Health," was inspired by Florence Nightingale's visit to the war-front hospitals in the Crimea 100 years ago and by her pioneering work in developing nursing as a professional discipline.

The Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr. M. G. Candau, stated in his message:

"The nurse of today, whether at the bedside, in the operating theatre, in the clinic, the school or the home, is the friend and counselor of all and a welcome health teacher. Her importance in local health work and in community life is second to none. In addition to helping mothers and children, assuring that the community resources for prevention and care of disease are fully utilized, she often acts as the confidant of people who would take their personal problems to no one else. In most cases she is a necessary link between the individual on

the one hand, and the physician and the public health agencies on the other.

"The world needs more and yet more nurses. In the more fortunate parts of our planet it is estimated that there is one professionally trained nurse to every 300 of the population. But in some other countries the ratio is about 1 to 100,000.

"I therefore express the hope . . . that one result of the observance . . . will be that still more young women of character may be led to consider, as the field for their future career, the rewarding profession of nursing."

frontispiece . . .

Left: Candidate, with parent, arrives to register for nurse's training course given by the WHO maternal and child health demonstration team at Lahore Hospital, Pakistan. Top right: WHO nurse and midwife interpreter give talk on hygiene to mothers as part of the WHO nursing education project, Brunei, Borneo. Lower right: A WHO nurse explains the use of the basic instrument kit necessary for birth to a midwife in El Salvador.

WHO photographs

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